Criminal cases pending in the Country

†2079. SHRI RAGHAVJI: Will the Minister of Law JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the fact that more than one crore criminal cases are pending in the country;

(b) if so, the details of measures proposed for speedy disposal of these cases; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI RAM JETHMALANI) (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) Changes/Reforms in the administration of Criminal Justice system are a continuous process. Government has been taking a series of steps of simplify procedures and speed up of disposal of cases on the basis of the advice and recommendations of expert bodies like the Law Commission etc. Keeping this in view, Criminal Procedure Code (Amendment) Bill, 1994 has been moved in Parliament. The Law Commission, in its 154 Report has also made a number of recommendations in this regard. Various measures have been taken by the Government including appointment of Special Judicial/Metropolitan Magistrates for the disposal of petty criminal cases and adoption of other alternative modes of dispute resolution. In addition, the Supreme Court and High Courts have taken a number of steps for expenditious disposal of cases, viz., grouping and classification of cases involving similar question of law, setting up of specialised benches, computerization of listing of cases, etc. In pursuance of directions given by the Supreme Court in its Judgement dated 1.5.1996 in Writ Petition (Civil) No. 1128 of 1996, Common Cause Vs UOI, the Subordinate Courts have been directed to close cases involving minor offences, pending for two years and more in which proceedings have not commenced. Further, in pursuance of the orders passed on 13.10.1999 and 7.12.1999 by the Supreme Court of India, in the case — R.D. Upadhyay Vs State of Andhra Pradesh & Others, the Central Government has also written to all the State Governments and UT Administrations to take urgent necessary steps for expeditious disposal of cases of undertrials who are languishing in various jails in the country.

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.